

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, as presently amended and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-12 are pending in the present application and Claims 1 and 2 are amended and Claims 4-12 are added. Support for amendments to the claims can be found, for example, in the specification as originally filed at page 11, line 14 to page 13, line 11. Thus, no new matter is added.

In the outstanding Office Action, the title was objected to as non-descriptive; and Claims 1-3 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as anticipated by Okada (U.S. Pat. No. 4,573,681).

With respect to the objection to the title, the title is amended to be clearly indicative of the invention to which the claims are directed. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the objection to the title be withdrawn.

Before turning to the outstanding prior art rejections, it is believed that a brief review of the present invention would be helpful.

In this regard, the present invention describes a gaming apparatus that includes a variable display unit configured to variable display a plurality of symbols and a front side display unit having a first area for enabling viewing of the symbols displayed by the variable display unit and a second area, which surrounds the first area, for enabling the display of images thereon.

Turning now to the §102(b) rejection in the outstanding Office Action, Applicants respectfully traverse the §102(b) rejection based on Okada for the following reasons.

Claim 1 recites, in part,

the front side display unit having a first are for enabling viewing of the symbols displayed by the variable display unit and a second area, which surrounding the first area, for enabling displaying images thereon;

Newly added Claims 4 and 12 recite similar features.

Okada describes a front side display unit having windows 21a, 21b, and 21c for enabling the viewing of symbols displayed by reels R1, R2 and R3 in addition to a digital display section 22 which is detached from the windows 21a, 21b and 21c and is used to display the number of coins to be ejected thereon.

In contrast, Claim 1 recites that the second area for enabling displaying images surrounds the first area which is used for enabling viewing of the symbols. In other words, Claim 1 recites that the second display surrounds the first display area that displays the symbols while in Okada the two displays are detached.

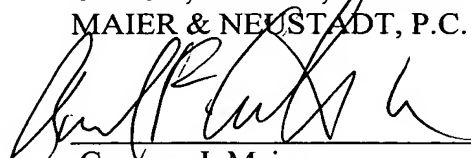
Accordingly, as Okada does not describe all of the features of Claim 1, Applicants submit that Okada does not anticipate the claimed invention.

Thus, Applicant respectfully submits that Claim 1 and similarly independent Claims 4 and 12 and claims depending therefrom patentably distinguish over Okada.

Consequently, in light of the above discussion and in view of the present amendment, the application is believed to be in condition for formal allowance. An early and favorable action to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

OBLON, SPIVAK, McCLELLAND,
MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C.



Gregory J. Maier
Attorney of Record
Registration No. 25,599

Customer Number
22850

Tel: (703) 413-3000
Fax: (703) 413 -2220
(OSMMN 06/04)

Raymond F. Cardillo, Jr.
Registration No. 40,440